

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers. Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A. Price \$1.00 per year or ten cents a copy.

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Vol. VIII

May, 1939

No. 86

DIAMOND DICK "ITEM"

By Harold C. Holmes

The Great Western "thick book" publication reprinted Diamond Dick stories in every other number beginning with No. 1 and ending with 25.

Great Western 1-3-5 contained the nine numbers of DDJr from 239 thru 247, three to a volume.

Great Western 7 contained DDJr Nos. 248-252 and 253. DDJr 249-250 and 251 were not reprinted which is rather too bad as these three were fine tales. But suppose they broke up the western sequence as DDJr 249 has its scene laid in Bulletville, Mont. 250 in Atlantic City, N. J., and 251 in New York City.

Great Western 9-11 contained three stories each DDJr 254 thru 259.

Great Western 13-15-17-19 contained four stories each, DDJr. 260 thru 275.

Great Western 21 contained DDJr. 276-277-279 and 280. DDJr. 278 was not reprinted probably because its scene was in Chicago.

Great Western 23 contained four numbers. DDJr. 281-282-310 which is itself a reprint of No. 21 and No. 311 which is itself a reprint of No. 26.

Great Western 25 which is the last "thick book" reprint contained three DDJr. 386-387 and 388.

No. 239 was the first large size issue of DDJr. and as you read along upward in the series I defy you to find one note of surpassing interest. The series about the "Comet Mine"

and the "T N & P RR" were classics for the lovers of Diamond Dick stories. This same high plane of stories continued thru No. 335. But No. 366 DD's Midnight Express: No. 337 DD Buried Alive: No. 338 DD's Triangle Duel: struck a new all-time low in novel writing. The reason for it we will never know, but they evidently turned the writing job over to the shoemaker on the corner. The Dicks, Harry, Two-Spot and Fritz were in them but so "out of character" you would never know them. "Praises Be" this didn't last long. As near as I can figure No. 339 DD's Race For Gold and No. 341 DD's Trip East; were by still a different author than the other two. But he did a more readable job.

With 342 they were restored to their best level either the author of 239 thru 335 or his equal. But as the style is identical with the "Comet Mine" and "T N & P RR" series I feel sure it was the same author. This author carried on at least thru 354 which is as far as I have read in the series as yet.

Most Diamond Dick readers are familiar with the fact that No. 294 thru 328 contained reprints of No. 1 thru 45 with Nos. 7 11 18 19 22 23 24 25 40 and 41 omitted. I have always believed that this was the only reprinting done in the DDJr so you may be sure that I was astonished about a month ago to discover that No. 340 Diamond Dick Missing; or, The Veteran's Unknown Pard is almost a word-for-word reprint of No. 60 Diamond Dick

Jr. out of Sight; or, The Disappearance at Lost Lake.

When Diamond Dick 340 appeared in April, 1903, I was living in Springfield, Mass. I bought the Tip Top and Work and Win each week. A boy by the name of Charlie Allen, my best pal, lived downstairs and he bought each week the Diamond Dick Jr. and Nick Carter. We always loaned our novels to each other so that I know I must have read No. 340 at that time.

The last of the year, 1914 I wrote to a boy in Minnesota who had a letter in the Tip Top Applause column. He told me of a large source of supply in J. N. Keel in Buffalo. I wrote there and what a find he was. Among hundreds of other things I got of him I filled in a complete set of the small size Diamond Dick. I began to read them at once and my records show me that on Sunday, January 9, 1916, I read No. 60. I had never forgotten the story of that novel but had forgotten where or when I had read it. I then assumed that at some previous time I must have had a copy of No. 60 and traded or given it away as I would have done as I had at that time 1903 and before files of only two kinds—Tip Top and Work and Win. This past Labor Day I read No. 340 for the first time since 1903—35 years. And to my surprise there was No. 60 almost word-for word.

Diamond Dick, Sr., is given the hero role in 340 and Bertie had it in No. 60. In No. 60 we meet for the first time a new "pardsie", the little colored boy, Junius Brutus Crow, "The Ace of Spades". In No. 340 they introduce this character, but name him George Washington Black. Handsome Harry promptly gives him the pet name of "Blackberry". The other "pardsie" in the story, Hop Wah, the Chinese can't quite master the word "Blackberry", but he does his best and calls him "Blackbelly". A fine story of the mysterious mansion on Lost Lake and Dick's imprisonment in the wonderful glass room under the waters of the lake. The pictures on the two novels are entirely different. That on No. 340 shows Handsome Harry and Bertie with drawn guns, entering a log house and demanding to know of its occupant the whereabouts of Diamond Dick. This log house stood on the opposite side of the lake from the mysterious man-

sion and is the point from which the rescue party set out later, in boats.

The picture on No. 60 is very fine. The upper third shows the surface of the lake with the tree covered shore in the distance. It is night. You can see the boathouse with lights from two of its windows. Back among the trees is visible the upper part of the mysterious mansion, with its windows all lighted up. On the surface of the lake is a rowboat containing Handsome Harry and Hop Wah. The lower two-thirds of the picture shows the scene under the waters of the lake. The wonderful glass room with Bertie confined there. He is just starting up from a chair in great surprise at the sight of the naked body of "Blackberry" who has swam down and pressed against the glass for Bertie to read a paper which tells that his pards are working for his rescue.

A bit of family history is given in this number. One Thomas Wade married a woman named Dizma, and they had a son, Richard. This Richard became a noted sport and detective, and earned for himself the sobriquet of Diamond Dick. He was a strikingly handsome young man and married one Alice Reardon, as beautiful a woman as ever lived. Diamond Dick, Jr., Bertrand, is their son.

I hope all the fellows who enjoy Diamond Dick stories will be lucky enough to secure a copy of either No. 60 or No. 340 and read this fine story. It has everything, mystery, adventure and some good laughs with the "pardsies."

THE END

SOAPY SMITH

In the fading "Wild West" days of the '90s, Soapy Smith, a cheap imitation of a Dime Novel hero, was a familiar character in western towns, particularly in mining camp localities. He was of the class known as "Tin Horn Gamblers" or "Confidence men." His equipment of trade consisted of a home-made broom handle tripod, a battered suit case, a ten cent bar of soap, a gift of gab and two or three "cappers" or decoys. His "racket" was a variety of the old threadbare 3-shell game, although enough different to make it new and interesting.

With the soap cut into oblongs

about one inch long by half inch square, a few paper wrappers, the otherwise empty suitcase, and tripod, he would set up his equipment at some busy street corner. Soon his cappers or lieutenants would drift along one by one and he would begin his harangue, thereby attracting passersby who would soon form a small crowd of spectators. Then he would show a small spot on the lapel of his coat and by dexterously applying the soap explain its unique cleansing qualities. This performance would occupy about one minute just long enough to make his audience wonder "what's next?" Then he would say that he was giving away this magic soap by selling it at the low price of five pieces for ten dollars, and would encourage the crowd by such remarks as: "Gents, if you'll never invest, you'll never gain; a faint heart never won a fair maiden. This will neither make nor break you, buy you a house and farm or set you up in business; come on! come on!" etc., etc. Then he would wrap up the small pieces of soap, throwing them into the open suitcase lid. After wrapping a dozen or so, he would take from his pocket a \$20 bill, wrap it around a piece of soap, a paper wrapper over that, press it against the hinge of the suitcase as to make sure it was tightly wrapped, and in this way "accidentally" break the wrapper, leaving exposed the green color of the bill. Throwing this into the case with the others, he would stir them around with his hand, saying: "Now gents, here's the chance of a lifetime. I will sell you five pieces for \$10 and then buy one back for \$10. You can't lose, can you?" Quickly a capper would come forward, throw over a \$10 bill, select five pieces, including of course the one with the green currency showing. Soapy would repeat his offer of \$10 for one of them, but the capper with a wise look would say, "Oh no! you don't!" open the prize package, extract a \$20 bill, display it to the crowd and happily retire to the rear.

The same process would be repeated this time an innocent bystander would select five, including of course the one with the green showing, and in order to be on the safe side would accept Soapy's offer to buy one from him for \$10; this done, soapy would

display a \$20 bill extracted from his purchase, (the green one, of course); the other man would have four blanks but still have his \$10. Again the tenderfoot would buy five and immediately he would hear voices behind (cappers) saying, "Hold on to it; you've got it", and with an air of wisdom decline Soapy's offer to buy one back. Hurriedly opening the green one he would find to his chagrin that it contained a one dollar bill, not a twenty. The trick was a sleight of hand method; when a capper purchased he would get \$20, but with a stranger one dollar was the limit.

At one time when \$20 was won, some one indiscreetly said to his neighbor, "capper." Quick as a flash Soapy grabbed a long bladed knife which lay conveniently open and ready for use in the suitcase, and yelled, "Who said 'capper'? I'll rip his heart out", and to the capper, "Friend did I ever see you before?" and of course the friend said "No, never." The police never interfered; probably like police in some of our larger cities, they were trained to overlook such small misdemeanors.

When the Klondike gold rush came along Soap migrated to that far northern country, and later was killed in a saloon brawl in Skagway. He left behind him many people who took his advice in trying to get rich quick, but who never succeeded, at least not by indulging in any of his schemes.

—J. H. AMBRUSTER.

HOW TO GET DIME NOVELS FOR NOTHING

Many dime novel collectors do not improve their collections as they cannot afford to spend money. They moan about the rising cost of dime novels, and do nothing about it.

Yet these collectors could build up large collections without cost, and put their hobby on a paying basis.

The method is simple—get new, worth while collectors into the hobby. Men who can afford to spend money—retired business men—men of importance in various fields.

These prospects can be located in almost any community, no matter how small. NO MAN IS TOO BIG TO

COLLECT DIME NOVELS. Remember that, when thinking of prospects in your territory.

Spend some time in locating prospects and getting them interested in the hobby.

If you get only two or three such men collecting, you can sell them enough novels, at a good profit, to pay for all the novels you want for your own collection.

In other words, become a "dealer" as well as a collector. It requires no capital, only energetic personal work.

Do not make a mistake of trying to sell dime novels cheaply to new, worth while collectors—it will make them think the hobby is a "catch penny" one, and hardly worth while.

This work, besides being profitable, will also give you the personal acquaintance of worth while people which will be valuable to you in other ways.

So—don't hide your hobby and collection under a bushel—get all the publicity you can for it—newspapers are always glad to publish articles on dime novels—make the hobby 100% interesting and profitable.

GOING TO NEW YORK?

By Alan E. Schaeffer

An eye-treat is in store for those novel-bugs who plan to visit New York City during the summer, or in fact, any time later.

Simply wend your way to the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street, and have a clerk direct you to the Office of the Director. There you will identify yourself, answer a few questions which will be asked of you, and ask for a card entitling you to entry to Room 303, known as the Rare Book or "Reserve" Room. The latter room is really a vault with a lock on the barred door. Give the little bell a twist and an attendant will leave you in. Once again you will be asked to enter your name and address on a register. Then ask to see the bulletin listing the Beadle Collection. Pick out the numbers you want to see and the attendant will bring them forth for you to gaze upon.

Some of the novels are fragile and brittle with yellow age, but they are the "real thing" and include hundreds of titles quite rare. The novels

cannot, of course, be taken out, but it is well worth any ardent novel-collector's time to go and peruse this valued collection.

An even larger collection may be seen at the Congressional Library at Washington, D. C., for those who live down toward Dixie.

The dime novel is dead; long live the dime novel.

\$50,000 REWARD

Are offered for the apprehension of the notorious "Red Rajah," the man with the "Heart of Fire," who stole the "Ebon Mask," from the "Banker's Ward." The "Masked Miner" with the "Scarlet Hand" started in pursuit of him. On the road he met "Wild Nathan," who told him that "Red Rajah" had embarked on the "Ocean Girl" in search of the "Phantom Princess," who was "Out in the World" traveling with the "White Witch." Hearing this, the "Masked Miner" returned and told it to "Duke White," who in return told him about "Madeleine's Marriage" with "Overland Kit," the man who committed to prison, "Without Mercy," "Ludwig, the Wolf," for stealing the "Black Crescent" from "Bessie Raynor," and that "Royal Keene, the California Detective," found out that "Hercules, the Hunchback," had it in his possession, so he took it and returned it to his owner. After this, the "Masked Miner" went to his home, where he found "Old Grizzly," "Hawkeye Harry," and the "Mustangers" playing cards, with the "Ace of Spades" for trump. On entering, "Hawk-eye Harry" asked him if he had heard about "Orphan Nell" being "Tracked to Death" by "Wolf Demon" for letting herself be "Oath Bound" by the "Boy Clown" not to tell the "College Rivals" "Adria's" "Dark Secret," to which the "Masked Miner" replied that he had, and that "Wolf Demon" has been caught "In the Web" by the "Red Macheppa," and that he had been turned over to the "Avenging Angels."

—JOHN F. DAY,

POEMS WORTH READING AGAIN

Sent In By George S. Barton

BALLADE OF DIME NOVELS

Arthur Guiterman, in "Poems"

Gone are the tales that once we read!
 And none that come within our ken
 May equal those that filled the head
 Of many a worthy citizen
 Who thrilled with boyish rapture
 when

In retribution stern and just
 "The deadly rifle spoke—and then
 Another redskin bit the dust."

We had no malice, not a shred;
 For which of us would hit a wren?
 Not blood, but ink was what we shed;
 And yet, we bore ourselves like
 men!

With Buckhorn Bill and Bigfoot Ben
 In clutch of steel we put our trust,
 Until, deprived of oxygen,
 Another redskin 'bit the dust.

On moccasins with silent tread
 We tracked our foes through marsh
 and fen,

We rescued maidens sore bestead
 From savage thrall and outlaw's
 den,

We feared no odds of one to ten,
 Nor hatchet stroke nor bowie thrust,
 While still, in wood or rocky glen,
 Another redskin bit the dust.

Envoi

Take up the long neglected pen,
 Redeem its valiant steel from rust,
 And scrawl those magic words again:
 "Another redskin bit the dust!"

QUESTIONNAIRE

Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup

Say fellows how about filling in this questionnaire. You might not all have the time or inclination to write articles for my Dime Novel Roundup, but you can fill out this form so that I can from time to time when space permits print them for the entertainment of our vast audience.

RALPH F. CUMMINGS,
 Fisherville, Mass.

During what years did you read the old time Dime Novels?

Give a few names of your favorite Authors.

Give names of a few of your favor-

ite stories.

Give names of a few of your favorite Novels.

When did you last read the old time Dime Novels?

Your further remarks will be appreciated.

NEW MEMBERS IN H. H. BROTHERHOOD FOR 1939

Nos.

18. Charles F. Westbrook, E. 1204 Illinois Ave., Spokane, Wash.
25. George S. Barton, 212 Summer St., Boston, Mass.
46. Patrick Mulhall, Co. Kilkenny, Castlecomer, Ireland.
51. Harold C. Holmes, 184 Temple St., New Haven, Conn.
63. Wm. Langell, 1654 O'Farrell St., San Francisco, Calif.
81. Eli A. Messier, 117 Morton Ave., Woonsocket, R. I.
111. Alan Schaeffer, 113 Cherry St., Myerstown, Pa. (New Member)

Change of Address

Ray Menger, 4034 W. 59th Pl., Los Angeles, Calif.
 Wm. M. Giles, 1511—3rd Ave., Apt. 12, Rock Island, Ill.

FREE AD SPACE OF 25 WORDS

WANTED

Liberty Boys of 76—Nos. 173 175 176 181 187 202 215 216 218 226 228. Chas. F. Westbrook, E. 1204 Illinois Ave., Spokane, Wash.

I have to trade: Complete set of Tousey's Moving Picture Stories, Nos. 1 to 622, and Tousey's Mystery Mag. Nos. 1 to 170. I want baseball guides and baseball material of all kinds. Charles Bragin, 1525 W. 12th St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

FOR SALE

Union Jack 2d. nice: 1197 1204 1221 1222 1223 1312 1311 1315 1183 1258 1259 1261 1287 1225 1226 1227 1234 1235 1236 1237 1238 1239 1246 1268 1212 1213 1214 1239 1290 1297 1307 1272 1291 1178 1215 1279 1282 1284 1286 1525 1298 1299 1300 1301 1207 1172 1228 1229 1230 1231 1248 1249 1250 1251 1257 1186 1194 1195 1288 1302 1209 1211 1217 1224 1444 1247 1253 1254 1255 1256 1262 1263 1264 1526 1527 1529 1528 1530 — also a lot of Detective Weekly for sale at 10c each. Ralph F. Cummings, Fisherville, Mass.

Brotherhood Members: Mr. Benners is very sick, and I've been called to-night; but don't worry, I'll see that the Roundup gets out all O. K. Whoever had ads for the Birthday Number, I'm sorry to say, that I've misplaced them; so ask if you will please send in new ads, and besides, I'm making the Birthday and Dedication number all in one as we dedicate the Happy Hours Brotherhood July, this year.

Bro. Leighter says that "True" for May, 1939, contains a long article on Cole Younger.

Be on the lookout for the Boston Herald, Sunday, Boston, Mass., as your publisher will have a write-up, but don't know how soon.

Bro. Leighter says there was a fine illustrated article on Frank Reade Novels, and the modern 33-passenger Stratoliners of today, in the Boston Sunday Globe, Boston, Mass.

WANTED

Odd Numbers or otherwise of Frank Leslie's Chimney Corner—
and
Tousey's Arm Chair

GEO. N. BECK
2114 Scott St., Davenport, Iowa

WANTED

Munro's Girls and Boys of America
Nos. 15 18 19 21 22 23 26 28 to 32 113
117 and 194.

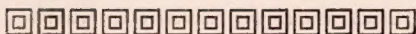
Saturday Journals

417 455 456 and 469

Also

"When Lovely Maiden Stoops To
Folly"

WM. J. BENNERS
1815 N. 16th St., Philadelphia, Pa.



WANTED

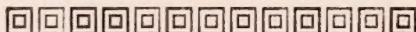
Bound Volumes of
GOLDEN DAYS
in good condition

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what you want in CASH for them

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- copies missing. Seven have no
- covers; a very few are reprints
- mostly all are in fine shape—a
- lot of them just like new.
- Price for the Set\$400

L. MORGAN

- 3018—25th Street N. E.,
- Washington, D. C.

WANTED

Any information, letters or Dime and Nickel Novels that had stories written by Lewis J. Gardner. Some of Beadle's Dime Novels between Nos. 100 and 110 have his stories under another name. Please send list of what you have.—Ralph Cummings.

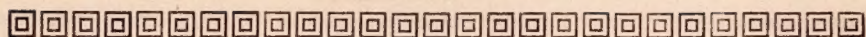
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S. BURTON

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